TOPIC: UPDATE ON THE PROCESS TO CONSIDER MODIFICATION

TO ADMISSION AND REMEDIAL POLICIES

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**POLICY** 

# I. <u>SUMMARY</u>

State law (§23-1-113 C.R.S.) requires the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) review the admission standards policy and the remedial education policy by December 15, 2013. The review process is intended to provide an opportunity to identify successes and gaps in the current Admission Standards Policy (CCHE policy I, F) and the Remedial Education Policy (CCHE policy I, E).

The policy review process has completed its first phase: developing a task force, reviewing the policies, and establishing preliminary recommendations. The task forces will now begin vetting recommendations with community stakeholders. This process is intended to inform recommendations for both the Admission Standards and the Remedial Education Policies prior to CCHE consideration or action.

Task Forces have been meeting since May 2012 to review these policies. These groups have had thoughtful conversations about how these policies can help improve the success of students in college, as they consider a variety of revision options. Although the final revision decision will be made by the Commission towards the end of this year, the groups remain bold with their recommendations and are looking towards a more transparent, flexible policy that will encourage greater student achievement in college.

This policy review process exemplifies Colorado's continued commitment to ensure that more students graduate from high school college and career ready. Since the 2008 passage of CAP4K (SB 08-212), we have taken several key steps to ensure the P-12 and postsecondary systems of education are aligned in both practice and policy.

Continuing on schedule for implementing CAP4K, the CCHE and State Board of Education (SBE) are on track to adopt criteria for a high school diploma endorsement, which is intended to indicate that a student is college or career ready without the need for remediation; endorsed diplomas will guarantee the recipient admission to Colorado's moderately selective and open enrollment public institutions and "priority consideration" at all selective and highly selective public institutions in Colorado. DHE is working with the Colorado Department of Education's Graduation Development Council to ensure that their guidelines align with higher education admission standards.

# II. <u>BACKGROUND</u>

The admission standards policy was last revised in 2003. At this time, the CCHE adopted the "Higher Education Admission Requirements" or "HEAR," the minimum coursework required for admission to a four-year institution in Colorado. These standards were phased in in 2008 and 2010. In 2010, the State Board of Education adopted new Colorado Academic Standards, which are consistent with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Recently, in May, 2013, the SBE established minimum graduation guidelines. Aligning the Admission Standards and Remedial Education policy with each other as well as with these K-12 policies is also required by Colorado law.

## III. STAFF ANALYSIS

## **Admission Standards Policy Revision Recommendations Considerations:**

## **Summary of Recommendations:**

The task force focused its efforts on three main questions:

- How predictive is the index for student success, retention and completion in college?
- How well do HEAR (Higher Education Admission Requirements) preparing students for college level work?
- How well do transfer admission standards ensuring success of transfer students?

Based on the research, data and presentations the task force is considering recommending the following policy revisions:

- Remove the index from the statewide Admission Standards policy. Instead of an index, institutions would evaluate the rigor of a student's curriculum and preparation to determine admission to college based upon criteria similar to the Postsecondary and Workforce Ready (PWR) endorsed diploma.
- Transition the policy to emphasize competency demonstration rather than credit hour accumulation. Continue to allow for the use of competency-based assessments to meet admission requirements and as well as time-based curriculum in high school. HEAR requirements would continue to play a role in determining a student's preparation, but alternative demonstrations of competence would be purposely integrated into the policy.

- Change the transfer admission standards to students with 24 credits or more, rather than 13 credits or more, the current practice. Under this recommendation, freshman standards would apply to all new freshmen applicants and to transfer applicants with fewer than 24 college level semester credit hours complete at the time of enrollment. A transfer student would be defined as anyone who completed 24 credit hours (or more) of college level coursework at another regionally accredited institution after completion of high school or after earning a GED.
- Applicants who complete an AA or AS degree from a regionally accredited public Colorado institution would be guaranteed admission at a Colorado public four year institutions, except Colorado School of Mines, provided they meet the minimum cumulative GPA standard and completed all courses with a grade of C- or better. (University of Colorado, Boulder currently has a successful program similar to this that could be used as an example.) Admission to a receiving institution would not guarantee enrollment in a specific degree/major program.

## **Remedial Education Policy Revision Recommendation Considerations:**

#### Summary of Recommendation Considerations:

The task force narrowed their review to the following questions:

- Should the state increase the number of tests recognized for use in determining students' readiness for college and course placement?
- Should the state add alternative college-ready assessments—Compass, PARCC (the expected successor to CSAP) and Smarter Balanced—in addition to the already recognized ACT, SAT and Accuplacer in determining students' readiness for college and course placement?
- Do the CCHE's cut scores accurately predict student success in college level courses?
- Should the remedial policy consider differentiated placement for mathematics depending on the students program of study?

Based upon its analyses of prevailing research on institutional/system practices and student outcomes, the task force considered recommending the following modifications to the state's remedial policy:

 Add Compass, PARCC, Smarter Balanced assessments to the already recognized ACT, SAT, Accuplacer assessment. It is believed that adding these additional assessments will provide institutions with more flexibility and options to determine a student's readiness for college-level coursework.

- Use institutional course level data to determine cut scores for college ready determination and course placement.
- English and Reading will continue to have one score to determine college readiness and course placement. Math readiness should incorporate a range of primary and secondary assessment scores. These ranges may vary to reflect the quantitative requirements of a student's particular program of study.

The task forces will make final recommendations in the fall. The DHE staff will continue to update you during the review process. Recommendations for action by the Commission will be made in late 2013.

Community Town Hall Meetings Several town hall meetings are scheduled throughout Colorado (see dates and times below). The purpose of these town hall meetings is to discuss the proposed recommendations with a broad group of stakeholders. In several locations there will be two meetings, one with the campuses (college faculty and administrators) and one with the community (high school administrators and parents). The Civic Canopy, a non-profit facilitation organization based in Colorado, will serve as the facilitators for these sessions; Civic Canopy will also assemble feedback from the meetings, which will be shared with the task forces in July and August. Current town hall meetings are scheduled as follows:

- Aurora Public Schools, May 8<sup>th,</sup> 5-7pm, Hinkley High School
- May 20 Denver, 5-7 p.m. at North high school
- June 3 Sterling, 5-7 p.m. at Sterling High School auditorium
- June 4 Colorado Springs, 6-8 p.m.
- June 17 Fort Collins, 1-3 p.m. and 5-7 p.m. at CSU Campus Lory Student Center
- June 18 Denver, 4-6 p.m. at Half Moon, Arapahoe Community College
- June 24 Durango, 5-7 p.m. at Durango 9-R Administration building, hosted by Fort Lewis College
- June 26 Grand Junction, 5-7 p.m. at University Center, Colorado Mesa University

As more town halls are confirmed, DHE staff will communicate the dates and times of these with the Commission. Commissioners are invited to attend any and all town hall meetings.

#### IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

No action required. This is an information item.

Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) June 7, 2013

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# STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §22-1-113